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ABSTRACT

"The Practitioner" is subtitled "A Newsletter for the On-Line Administrator." This theme issue is devoted to recent developments in the teacher evaluation process. Contents include a review of research on teacher evaluation, an overview of legal requirements, and examples of outstanding teacher evaluation programs in six high schools. Thirteen suggestions to improve the teacher evaluation process are offered for principals. (5 references) (LMI)

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THE PRACTITIONER

nassp

A Newsletter for the On-Line Administrator

Vol. XVII, No. 1 ISSN 0912-6160 October 1990

An Update on Teacher Evaluation

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An Update on Teacher Evaluation

Many states have recently passed legislation that encourages or mandates more effective teacher evaluation. This evaluation can be directed toward decisions of continued employment (summative evaluation) or toward instructional improvement (formative evaluation). There is widespread disagreement about which purpose should be emphasized, the degree to which the two can be separated, or who should be evaluated.

Many educators believe that an evaluation system should promote the development of all teachers, not just those having difficulty. Some evaluation procedures place primary emphasis on the beginning teacher or those new to the system. Tenured teachers are only periodically evaluated. An excellent model for school-level evaluation systems is set forth in Stufflebeam's (1988) Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. The Personnel Evaluation Standards: How To Assess Systems for Evaluating Educators "presents and elaborates 21 standards by which to plan and assess systems for evaluating teachers, professors, administrators, counselors, and other educators. Basically, the standards require that evaluations be proper, useful, feasible, and accurate."

What Research Tells Us

Manatt (1982) offers the following steps in the teacher performance cycle suggested by research:

1. Establish the rules of the game
2. Orient teachers
3. Analyze lesson plans
4. Conduct pre-observation conference
5. Conduct classroom observation(s)
6. Conduct post-observation conference
7. Synthesize data
8. Write the evaluation report
9. Set job improvement targets (repeat sequence)

The October 1989 NASSP edition of The Best of ERIC on Educational Management annotates 11 different sources of literature on teacher evaluation. These annotations include involving teachers in the evaluation process, updating evaluation processes and instruments, using multiple methods to assess teachers, and making the distinction between formative and summative evaluation.

Some legal requirements also bear on the evaluation process. Batagiannis' (1984) review of litigation from 1972 to 1983 summarizes the pertinent conclusions.

- √ The courts expect school boards to establish written standards of performance for teachers.
- √ A lack of documentation, even in obvious cases of incompetency, will cause the courts to rule against the school board.
- √ The courts have been consistent in ruling that administrators must make an effort to remediate a teacher whose deficiency is defined as remediable.
- √ The courts have not established the length of the remediation period, but six months or less is usually viewed as inadequate.

Performance-based teacher evaluation is gaining

currency. Valentine (1989) defines performance-based, developmental teacher evaluation as: "a process for professional improvement which includes identifying performance expectations, documenting performance, conferencing about performance, developing plans to improve performance, and making personnel decisions based upon performance." Currently, the emphasis seems to be on performance objectives established by teachers and administrators (with some involvement of parents).

The following trends synthesized from the current literature and research can help principals improve their teacher evaluation procedures:

1. Orientation sessions should be held periodically to familiarize teachers and administrators with the specific procedures and forms to be used during teacher evaluation.

2. The evaluation cycle should begin with an emphasis on the formative approach to evaluation. The summative aspect of teacher evaluation can utilize data gathered during the formative stage.

3. The evaluation cycle should include multiple data, those gathered by administrators from classroom observation, self-evaluation by the teacher, peer evaluation by other teachers, and evaluation by students.

4. Videotaping equipment should be available for use by teachers in self-evaluation. A joint analysis of tapes by teachers and administrators is helpful.

5. Teachers should be encouraged to propose goals for classroom instruction. Administrators and teachers should jointly arrive at final instructional goals.

6. A pre-observation conference should be held to determine what the teacher intends to do so administrators can plan how best to conduct the classroom observation. Results of the pre-conference should be recorded.

7. Administrators should spend the entire class period observing without interruption. Evaluators should record exactly what they observe in the classroom without making judgments at this stage.

8. Administrators should hold a post-observation conference with the teacher within two or three days. A definite time should be scheduled to discuss the extent to which goals are met.

9. Improvement goals should be developed jointly by teachers and administrators after observations have been made. These improvement goals should be discussed during the post-observation conference, be mutually agreed upon, and then form the basis for the next observation session.

10. Other teachers should observe and "coach" teachers who need special assistance. They should also be observed when they themselves are teaching.

11. A second observer such as an assistant principal should be present for a second observation to assist in validating the observation.

12. The evaluation instrument should provide an opportunity for the teacher to give a written response to the final evaluation. Due process should be provided for teachers who disagree with the final evaluation.

13. Many states now mandate or recommend a mentor for new or beginning teachers. Mentors should be selected carefully to be compatible with their partners. (Often mentors are specifically prohibited from formally evaluating those teachers for whom they serve as mentors.)

TO ILLUSTRATE

Many schools with outstanding teacher evaluation programs have been identified with the assistance of university professors in various states. Program documents were sought from principals. A review of the documents indicate the following common points of emphasis: 1) fundamental guidelines, 2) domains evaluated, 3) recording of evaluations, 4) frequency of evaluations, 5) phases/timelines, 6) appeal provisions, 7) training programs for evaluators, 8) professional development plans (remediation), and 9) probationary teachers.

The following examples illustrate many of these common elements.

Southington High School **720 Pleasant St.**
Jerome Auclair, Principal **Southington, Conn. 06489**

Southington is a senior high school with 1,304 students in grades 10-12 and 136 teachers. All teachers are periodically rated as "competent," "focus for growth," or "needs assistance." Five major areas of performance evaluation have been identified: professional knowledge and qualification, planning and instruction, interaction with students, student evaluation, and professional responsibilities. Each perfor-

mance domain has specific criteria.

1. The specific criteria for professional knowledge and qualifications are the following:
- √ Demonstrates facility in the skills of reading, writing, and mathematics
- √ Demonstrates knowledge of the subject(s) to be taught
- √ Demonstrates knowledge of human growth and development as it relates to the teaching-learning process.

2. For planning and instruction, the specific criteria are:
- √ Plans instruction to achieve selected objectives
- √ Effectively implements instructional plans and uses appropriate instructional techniques
- √ Effectively organizes time, space, materials, and equipment for instruction
- √ Facilitates the independence of the student as learner
- √ Monitors for understanding and adjusts teaching where appropriate.

3. Four specific criteria are listed for interaction with students:
- √ Effectively communicates with students
- √ Helps students develop positive self-concepts
- √ Establishes a positive learning environment
- √ Maintains high expectations and motivates students.

4. The specific criteria for student evaluation are:
- √ Effectively assesses student needs and progress
- √ Effectively meets individual needs of students.

5. For professional responsibilities, three specific criteria are listed:
- √ Works cooperatively and effectively with staff members
- √ Meets professional responsibilities
- √ Encourages and maintains the cooperative involvement and support of parents and the community.

When performance by an individual teacher fails to meet satisfactory standards, remediation is undertaken via "Intensive Assistance." The teacher and evaluator may implement one or more of the following resources: an Intensive Assistance Team, a mentor, a peer coach, workshops or conferences, visitations, consultant(s), or counselor(s).

Liberty High School **200 Blue Jay Dr.**
Martin Jacobs, Principal **Liberty, Mo. 64068**

Liberty High School evaluates four major teacher performance domains: the instructional process, classroom management, interpersonal relationships, and professional responsibilities. Each of these domains has specific criteria:

The Instructional Process
- √ Demonstrates appropriate preparation for classroom instruction
- √ Demonstrates knowledge of curriculum and subject matter
- √ Provides opportunities for individual differences
- √ Implements effective teaching techniques
- √ Utilizes varied resources effectively
- √ Teaches to objectives
- √ Uses instructional time effectively
- √ Promotes high expectations for students
- √ Motivates students appropriately
- √ Provides students with evaluative feedback.

Classroom Management
- √ Organizes classroom environment to promote learning
- √ Manages student behavior in an appropriate manner.

Interpersonal Relationships
- √ Demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with students
- √ Demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with educational staff
- √ Demonstrates positive interpersonal relations with parents/patrons.

Professional Responsibilities
- √ Demonstrates a commitment to professional growth
- √ Follows the policies and procedures of the school district
- √ Assumes responsibilities outside the classroom as related to the school.

Amphitheater High School **125 West Yavapai**
Mary Jeanne Monroe, Principal **Tucson, Ariz. 87505**

The Tucson teacher performance evaluation was developed through a collaborative process involving district teachers and administrators. A standing committee consisting of teachers, evaluators, and central office administrators revises and reviews the evaluation system.

Amphitheater High School has 130 teachers and 2,500 students in grades 9-12. Elements included in

the teacher performance evaluation system are as follows:

1. A reliable instrument, including specific criteria for measuring effective teaching performance

2. An assessment of the competencies of teachers as related to the criteria

3. Actual classroom observation

4. Specific and reasonable plans for the improvement of teacher performance

5. Appeal procedures for teachers disagreeing with the evaluation if the evaluation is used as a criterion for determining compensation.

An improvement plan must be developed when any competency is rated "needs improvement." Indication of this rating must be accompanied by anecdotal data to support the judgment. No more than three areas can be targeted for improvement at one time.

The plan, agreed upon by the teacher and evaluator, must specify the specific competency area(s) needing improvement, action(s) and timelines for improvement, expected outcomes, and administrative assistance to be provided. Areas identified for improvement are re-evaluated at checkpoints designated in the improvement plan.

When a competency area is rated "unsatisfactory" by the evaluator, a remediation plan must be developed. If sufficient improvement has not occurred in an area targeted for improvement, a remediation plan is also required. No more than three areas can be targeted for remediation at one time.

The remediation plan, agreed upon by teacher and evaluator, must specify the specific deficiency(ies) to be overcome, the level of performance necessary to demonstrate the deficiency(ies) has been overcome, specific actions and timelines for overcoming the deficiency(ies), and a description of assistance to be provided to the teacher.

Areas identified for remediation are monitored at progress checkpoints designated in the remediation plan. A final assessment evaluates whether the deficiency(ies) have been overcome.

Century High School **100 Century Ave.**
Jeffrey Geigen, Principal **Bismarck, N.D. 58501**

Century High School classifies its teachers for evaluation into three functional groups:

Group A. Teachers new to the district and teachers for whom it is decided a more structured supervision is indicated. This evaluation process involves a higher degree of direct administrative supervision including two performance reviews annually.

Group B. Teachers with more than three years of experience in the district who have demonstrated competence but who have been purposely or randomly selected. This is a cooperative process, primarily teacher-directed, and is generally done every other year.

Group C. Teachers with more than three years of experience in the district who have demonstrated competence. This is primarily a teacher-directed process and is normally initiated no more than twice every three years.

Cleveland Junior High School **100 Walsh St.**
Luz Maria Serrano, Principal **St. Paul, Minn. 55106**

Cleveland Junior High has 38 teachers and 485 students in grades 7 and 8. Observations are considered to constitute the formative/supervisory process while the evaluation report is summative.

The teacher observation report contains the following sections and areas of evaluation.

I. Instruction
  A. Planning/preparation
    1. Curriculum
    2. Providing for individual differences
  B. Teaching of Lesson
    1. Lesson Design
      - Focus
      - Objectives
      - Direct instruction
      - Checking for understanding
      - Guided practice
      - Independent practice
      - Closure (can occur at various points of lesson)
    2. Motivation of Students
    3. Clarity
    4. Questioning Techniques
    5. Participation
    6. Time on Task
    7. Teaching for Transfer
    8. Enthusiasm
    9. Evaluation and Feedback
  C. Management and Organization
    1. Effective Facilitation and Control
    2. Management of Time
    3. Use and Care of Materials/Equipment

4. Safety
5. Record Keeping

II. Multi-Cultural, Gender-Education

III. Interpersonal/Organizational Relations, Personal Qualities
A. Rapport with Students and Adults
B. Professional Growth and Self-Improvement
C. Communication Skills
1. Written
2. Oral
3. Listening
D. Follows Policies and Procedures

The district's staff development department provides resources to improve instruction once areas of improvement are identified by the teacher and the principal.

Edwards Middle School **2400 Stanton Rd.**
Kathy Garber, Principal **Conyers, Ga. 30208**

The Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP) was developed by a statewide committee in response to the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act. The QBE Act requires that all personnel employed by local units of administration, including elected and appointed school superintendents, shall have their performance evaluated annually by appropriately trained evaluators.

The Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP) includes two instruments—The Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI) and the Georgia Teacher Duties and Responsibilities Instrument (GTDRI).

Beginning with the annual evaluation results from the 1989-90 school year, individuals with unsatisfactory annual evaluations will not be eligible for a step increase on the state salary schedule. All cases in which state salary increments are withheld will be reviewed by the local superintendent or designee.

Professional Development Plans (PDPs) are encouraged for all teachers. The PDP is part of continuing staff development for the benefit of the individual teacher. Teachers whose overall summary evaluation results are in the "unsatisfactory" category or who demonstrate other needs according to criteria established during the annual evaluation processs and who are offered a subsequent contract must have a plan. The plan is optional for others.

For teachers in the "unsatisfactory" category, measurement of progress on the PDP is required as part of the next year's annual evaluation. The plan includes (a) specific objectives for improvement, (b) activities and a timeline for meeting these objectives, (c) criteria for measurement of progress on the objectives, (d) a record of participation in recommended activities, and (e) a record of performance on specified criteria.

Evaluation activities must be conducted by trained evaluators. A trained evaluator is defined as an individual who has attended all state-approved, required GTEP training sessions, any required update training, and has met state-adopted evaluator proficiency requirements.

The dimensions listed under the Teaching Tasks on the Standard Form of the GTOI are as follows:

TEACHING TASK I: PROVIDES INSTRUCTION

• Dimension A: Instructional Level. The amount and organization of the lesson content are appropriate for the students based on their abilities and the complexity and difficulty of the material.

• Dimension B: Content Development. Content is developed through appropriate teacher-focused or student-focused activities.

• Dimension C: Building for Transfer. Lesson includes initial focus, content emphasis or linking, and summaries that build for transfer of learning.

TEACHING TASK II: ASSESSES AND ENCOURAGES STUDENT PROGRESS

• Dimension A: Promoting Engagement. Instructional engagement is promoted through stimulating presentations, active participation, or techniques that promote overt or covert involvement.

• Dimension B: Monitoring Progress. Progress, understanding, and bases of misunderstanding are assessed by interpreting relevant student responses, contributions, performances, or products.

• Dimension C: Responding to Student Performance. Students are provided reinforcement for adequate performances when appropriate, and specific feedback or correctives for inadequate performances.

• Dimension D: Supporting Students. Support for students is conveyed by using techniques such as providing encouragement, lowering concern levels, dignifying academic responses, and using language free of sarcasm, ridicule, and humiliating references.

TEACHING TASK III: MANAGES THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Dimension A: Use of Time. Use of instructional time is optimized by techniques such as providing clear directions and using efficient methods for transitions, materials distribution, and other routine matters and by techniques such as focusing on objectives and providing sufficient instructional activities.

- Dimension B: Physical Setting. The physical setting allows the students to observe the focus of instruction, to work without disruption, to obtain materials, and to move about easily; and it allows the teacher to monitor the students and to move among them.

- Dimension C: Appropriate Behavior. Appropriate behavior is maintained by monitoring the behavior of the entire class, providing feedback, and intervening when necessary.

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This *Practitioner* was prepared by Dale Findley, professor of educational administration, and Robert Estabrook, assistant professor, both at Indiana State University, Terre Haute.

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